

**NEWPORT COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
TUESDAY, February 14, 2006**

**MEETING MINUTES:**

The meeting began at 12:05 p.m. Chairwoman Councilperson Jeanne Marie Napolitano called the meeting to order . Thanked Lisa Gross and the staff at the Hyatt Regency Hotel for hosting this meeting and the beautiful luncheon.

**IN ATTENDANCE WERE:**

Chairwoman Jeanne Marie Napolitano, Len Panaggio, Greg Fater, Laurie Stroll, Karen Oakley, Lisa Gross, Donna Kohler, Harlan Tyler, Peter Roos, Charlie Vaillancourt were all present as Evan Smith made the roll call.

**STAFF PRESENT WERE:**

Evan Smith, Cathy Morrison, Debbie Gatta, Martha Sheridan, Kathryn Farrington, Susan Pratt, Diane Brown for Mary Ann Kelly.

**I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

**The previous meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Greg Fater and seconded by Charlie Vaillencourt. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **II. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

**The treasurer's report was read by Evan Smith in Mark Stenning's absence. City tax was down 1.12% and Regional Tax was down 6.29% for a combined growth of 2.38%. Everyone looked over the checkbook transactions, Debbie Gatta will identify what the Anthony Marsella line is for. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Greg Fater and seconded by Len Panaggio. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **III. STAFF REPORTS:**

**Each Staff Report will now reflect the figures of the previous month's activity. With the assistance of Susan Pratt, a power point presentation has been put together as an update on the many**

**projects and programs that the staff is working for.**

## **A. CONVENTION & TOURISM:**

**Martha Sheridan, Vice President Sales, although you have the written reports in your packet this presentation will give you the highlights of some of the activity we have been participating in.**

**December - our biggest activity in the fiscal year was the Washington, DC sales mission.**

- we had eight (8) outside sales appointments.**
- attend four (4) regional chapter meetings/receptions.**

**January - attended the 2006 MPI Professional Educational Conference in Charlotte, NC,**

**which is the US conference for the International Association of Meeting**

**Professionals. Martha was elected the incoming president. At the conference we**

**exhibited with the Hyatt, had 30 planners visit the booth, nine (9) solid inquiries**

**for future business and 2 ½ days of networking. Included in this conference is a**

**leadership training component in advance of my taking over.**

- Sponsored a meeting for the Westfield Chapter of MPI, which**

**includes**

**West Chester County, NY and Stamford, CT.**

- **Six industry partners joined us for this event. We received a sponsorship package**

**which includes exposure on their web-site.**

- **We conducted 25 outside sales appointments which are identified in your package.**

**February - so far, seems to be a strong month.**

**Upcoming - the NYC luncheon February 14th with seven of our industry partners.**

- **Hartford luncheon in March**

- **a trade showcase in Washington DC this week which we will update you on in the next meeting.**

**Tourism - Damon Gordon attended trade a show on international inbound travel.**

- **a vacation travel expo in Boston which gave us about 2500 additional names to**

**add to our data base.**

- **distributed through the visitor guide Winter Package information and key**

**locations throughout RI.**

- **conducted travel agent training at four AAA offices in Southeast New England,**

**and at five offices in CT.**

**March - AAA Travel 2006 Market Place to be held at Gillette Stadium.**

**- a Southern NE Tourism summit in Boston.**

**- will have an update at the next meeting for the ABA.**

**- will travel to Canada for a sales mission with other New England CVBs and tourism districts.**

**- Boston Globe travel show, participating in for the first time with public industry partners**

**- participating in a table top trade show which meets in Providence.**

**- Wedding revenue is close to \$20,000 since Aug. when we starting listing on the web-site.**

**Bookings were up compared to last year and the number of room nights was up for January. As for the number of leads they were up and the wedding leads were down compared to last year's numbers due to the wedding link on the web-site. The main source of leads is still the internet.**

**Business booked for January was from numerous organizations resulting in 1,235 total room nights with an economic impact of**

**\$577,486.00**

**The number of Tour Operator leads was up compared to last year's numbers in January. The number of room nights was up compared to last year at this time. Travel agent leads are up as compared to last year in January.**

## **B. MARKETING:**

**Kathryn Farrington, Director of Marketing, introduced Luke Schmueker from Salve Regina University, who is an intern working in the Marketing Department for this semester.**

**Marketing Dept. has taken part in several Boston major shows such the Boston Expo and the Boston Wine Expo that we co-op with three of our local wineries. Also, taking part with the Sales Dept. Boston Globe convention in March. This weekend, February 17-26, is the Winter Festival which we take part in, we receive a lot of PR from this and we are the only ticket office for this venue.**

**Involved in the CCM Brochure mailing, the Preservation Society is a part of this in which you buy into and they put your brochures throughout New England. These are placed in key places where we solicit people to plan meetings in Newport.**

**Media page on the web-site is Clean Pix which allows us to provide**

**good clean images for a writer, editor or from industry members who want an image for their magazine, etc. A great program to keep track of who and where images were sent.**

**Explains “Go Newport Premium Listing” –on our web page boxes that show images of properties and allows for wording of up to a 50 word description and can be changed frequently.**

**The February NCCVB Marketing Meeting is Wednesday the 15th at the Best Western Mainstay @11:00 am - our guest speaker is Hank Phillips from the National Tour Association talking on group tours. After the meeting he goes to Providence for a press conference on Tour Rhode Island at the state house.**

**March - is Irish Heritage month - 50th Anniversary of the St. Patrick's Day Parade -this is the 8th Annual Kinsale Festival of Food.**

**- Michael Gehirsch, Exec. Director of Destination Marketing Assoc. Intl. speaking on March 23rd at the Marriott.**

**- Yankee Magazine – together with the Hyatt and the Preservation Society gave us the back page of the February issue. Also, they are doing a summer sizzler and have chosen Newport for the location. They are planning an event to showcase advertisers and local cuisine which will be here in June.**

## **C. OPERATIONS:**

**Cathy Morrison, VP of Operations, we are soon to have two screens to display, free of cost to the industry, direct lines for reservations and availability**

- the Newport Mansion Store, which is a good source of revenue for us, is to be enlarged soon, possibly triple the size.**
- mural wall is complete and part of the extreme makeover to the center.**
- we have a new “welcome” sign which will have some lighting and landscaping**
- parking lot maintenance contract is with Moy Works and will go into effect**

**April 1st.**

- Wedding display box is complete and will change with the seasons, this was a way to utilize the old availability board.**

- WI-FI which is “wireless fidelity” - replaces dial-up access and will be available at**

**the Visitors Center - we are in the processing of negotiating with a company called**

**Ikoa. Some discussion as to reservations and**



**how WI-FI affects out current**

**system – to be taken up at another meeting**

#### **D. PRESIDENT’S REPORT:**

**Evan Smith, President/CEO, the staff works each year to create a program of works and the staff is currently completing our new Fiscal Year which begins April 1st, 2006 and will be out to you soon.**

- Submitted a Proposed Budget Addendum for review and approval.**
- February 16-17th will be traveling with Jean Marie to Washington, DC for a reception and will meet with a delegation going to the nation’s capital to support the Tall Ships function 2007. The purpose is to convince naval attachés and embassies throughout DC to bring their nations Tall Ships to Newport.**
- February 20 – 24th will be on vacation. If board members need any follow-up please call my staff.**
- February 28th, Tuesday at 7:00 pm – the City of Newport is having a workshop on tourism, the purpose is to increase communication between the business community and the city as to how it can help facilitate tourism issues. Once an agenda is out will forward it to you.**
- Thank you Susan Pratt for the work and assisting with the power point presentation.**

#### **MEDIA PLACEMENTS:**

**AAA Horizons, New England Travel Journal, New York Times,**

**Yankee Magazine.**

## **INFORMATION CENTER:**

**The total number of visitors to the Information Center for January was 4,374, down 27.15% from last January. The total number of visitors to the Information Center for the year was 4,374, down 27.15% compared to last year at this same time. The main source of visitors still comes from the New England states.**

## **V. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Follow-up on Bill #466AA – should it be re-introduced – should we table it, or is it a dead issue? Evan volunteered to follow up with Tim O'Reilly about this bill. Harlan suggests we table this and at a later time schedule a special meeting, possible in April, to be informed as**

to what is going and we have some better knowledge of it.

**B. February 9th – the Finance Committee met – the proposed new budget for 2006/07 for \$66,300 of expenditures was introduced and reviewed. A follow-up meeting will be on February 16th for any additional input.**

**C. Submitted for the boards approval the Proposed Budget Addendum 2005/06 – after reviewing**

**Greg Fater made the motion that this be used by the staff as a drawing board and be approved**

**now. Charlie Vaillencourt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **VI. OLD & OTHER BUSINESS:**

**By-laws committee – Len Panaggio, Chairman, Greg Fater and Harlan Tyler are meeting frequently and making progress and will have a draft ready at the next meeting.**

**Jean Marie thanks Lisa Gross, the Hyatt and the servers for their hospitality. For the future meetings, since these are luncheon meetings would like to extend the time to an hour and a half so as to include the business and have lunch.**

## **VII. ADJOURNAMENT:**

**A motion was made by Len Panaggio to adjourn and seconded by Greg Fater. It passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.**

**The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2006 at The International Tennis Hall of Fame at 12 noon.**